

What is claimed is:

1. A computer-network apparatus for integrating communication between parties involved with the funeral process, the apparatus comprising:

- 5       memory having first and second storage locations, the first storage location including data related to funeral product information and the second storage location including data related to funeral home information; and a network server in data communication with the memory and having a network interface, the network server having a processor configured to
- 10      (i) receive electrical signals embodying funeral product information through the interface from a supplier client device, and store the funeral product information in the first storage location;
- 15      (ii) provide electrical signals embodying funeral product information stored in the first storage location to a funeral home client device through the interface;
- 20      (iii) receive electrical signals embodying funeral home information from the funeral home client device through the interface, the funeral home information including selections from information stored in the first storage location, and store the funeral home information in the second storage location; and
- 25      (iv) provide electrical signals embodying funeral home information stored in the second storage location to a consumer client device through the interface.
2. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the funeral home information stored in the second storage location includes links to information in the first storage location.
3. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the funeral home information stored in the second location includes duplications of information in the first storage location.

30

4. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the interface is in electrical communication  
with the Internet.

5. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the memory is a plurality of databases.

5  
6. A computer-network apparatus for integrating communication between parties  
involved with the funeral process, the apparatus comprising:

a memory for storing funeral process information; and

a network server in electrical communication with the memory and a network  
10 interface, the network server including a processor configured to

- (i) provide an electrical signal embodying a menu of funeral process items  
to a client device through the interface, each menu item corresponding to a  
set of data stored in the memory,  
15 (ii) determine the appropriate set of data to retrieve from the memory in  
response to selection of one of the memory items, and  
(iii) provide an electrical signal embodying the appropriate set of data to  
the client device through the interface.

20  
7. The apparatus of claim 6, wherein the selection corresponds to product supplier  
information.

8. The apparatus of claim 7, wherein the product supplier information includes a list  
of products offered by product suppliers and associated prices.

25  
9. The apparatus of claim 6, wherein the client device is a funeral home client device  
and wherein the network server provides an electrical signal embodying the appropriate  
set of data to the funeral home client device in response to receiving an electrical signal  
from the funeral home client device embodying an authentication code and determining  
from the authentication code that the funeral home client device is authorized to receive  
30 the appropriate set of data.

10. The apparatus of claim 6, wherein the selection corresponds to funeral home information.
11. The apparatus of claim 10, wherein the funeral home information includes a list of 5 products and services and associated retail prices.
12. The apparatus of claim 6, wherein the client device is a consumer client device and wherein the network server provides an electrical signal embodying the appropriate set of data to the consumer client device in response to receiving an electrical signal from 10 the funeral home client device embodying an authentication code and determining from the authentication code that the consumer client device is authorized to receive the appropriate set of data.
13. The apparatus of claim 6, wherein the client device is a supplier client device and 15 wherein the network server provides an electrical signal embodying the appropriate set of data to the supplier client device in response to receiving an electrical signal from the funeral home client device embodying an authentication code and determining from the authentication code that the supplier client device is authorized to receive the appropriate set of data.
- 20
14. The apparatus of claim 6, wherein the selection corresponds to a funeral planner, and wherein the set of data includes computer code that causes the client device to proceed through a predetermined set of funeral planner steps with each step displaying a 25 funeral plan option on a display of the client device, and wherein each step results in the client device providing an electrical signal embodying funeral plan option selections to the network server through the interface.

15. A computer data signal embodied in a transmitted wave readable by a computer system and encoding a computer program of instructions for executing a computer process, the computer process comprising:

- 5 (i) displaying, in a sequence, a funeral plan option from a set of funeral plan options on a display of a client device for executing the computer process,
- (ii) receiving a funeral plan option selection through an input device of the client device,
- (iii) proceeding to a next funeral plan option to receive another funeral plan option selection, and
- 10 (iv) transmitting from the client device a computer data signal embodying the funeral product option selections made during each of the funeral planner steps.

15. A method for integrating communication between parties involved with the funeral process with a computer-implemented apparatus having a memory having first, second, and third storage locations, and a network server in data communication with the memory and having a network interface and a processor, the method comprising:

20 receiving, at the processor, electrical signals embodying funeral product information through the interface from a supplier client device and storing, by the processor, the funeral product information in the first storage location,

25 providing, by the processor, electrical signals embodying funeral product information stored in the first storage location to a funeral home client device through the interface,

30 receiving, at the processor, electrical signals embodying funeral home information from the funeral home client device through the interface, the funeral home information including selections from information stored in the first

storage location, and storing, by the processor, the funeral home information in the second storage location,

providing, by the processor, electrical signals embodying funeral home  
5 information stored in the second storage location to consumer a client device through the interface.

17. The method of claim 16, wherein the interface is in electrical communication with  
10 the Internet.

18. The method of claim 16, wherein the memory is a plurality of databases.

19. A method for integrating communication between parties involved with the  
15 funeral process with a computer-implemented apparatus having a memory for storing funeral process information and a network server in electrical communication with the memory and a network interface, the network server including a processor, the method comprising:

20 providing, by the processor, an electrical signal embodying a menu of funeral process items to a client device through the interface, each menu item corresponding to a set of data stored in memory;  
determining, by the processor, the appropriate set of data to retrieve  
in response to selection of one of the menu items; and  
25 providing an electrical signal embodying the appropriate set of data to the client device through the interface.

20. The method of claim 19, wherein the selection corresponds to product supplier information.

30

21. The method of claim 20, wherein the product supplier information includes a list of products offered by product suppliers and associated prices.

22. The method of claim 19, wherein the client device is a funeral home client device.

5

23. The method of claim 19, wherein the selection corresponds to funeral home information.

24. The method of claim 23, wherein the funeral home information includes a list of products and services and associated prices.

10

25. The method of claim 19, wherein the client device is a consumer client device.

26. The method of claim 19, further comprising receiving a second selection from the menu from the client device through the interface, receiving an electrical signal embodying additional funeral process information from the client device through the interface, and storing the additional funeral process information in an appropriate location in the memory as indicated by the second selection.

15

20

27. The apparatus of claim 19, wherein the selection corresponds to a funeral planner and the appropriate set of data includes computer program of instructions for executing a computer process, the computer process comprising:

25

(i) displaying, in a sequence, a funeral plan option from a set of funeral plan options on a display of a client device for executing the computer process,

(ii) receiving a funeral plan option selection through an input device of the client device,

(iii) proceeding to a next funeral plan option to receive another funeral plan option selection, and

(iv) transmitting from the client device a computer data signal embodying the funeral product option selections made during each of the funeral planner steps.

30